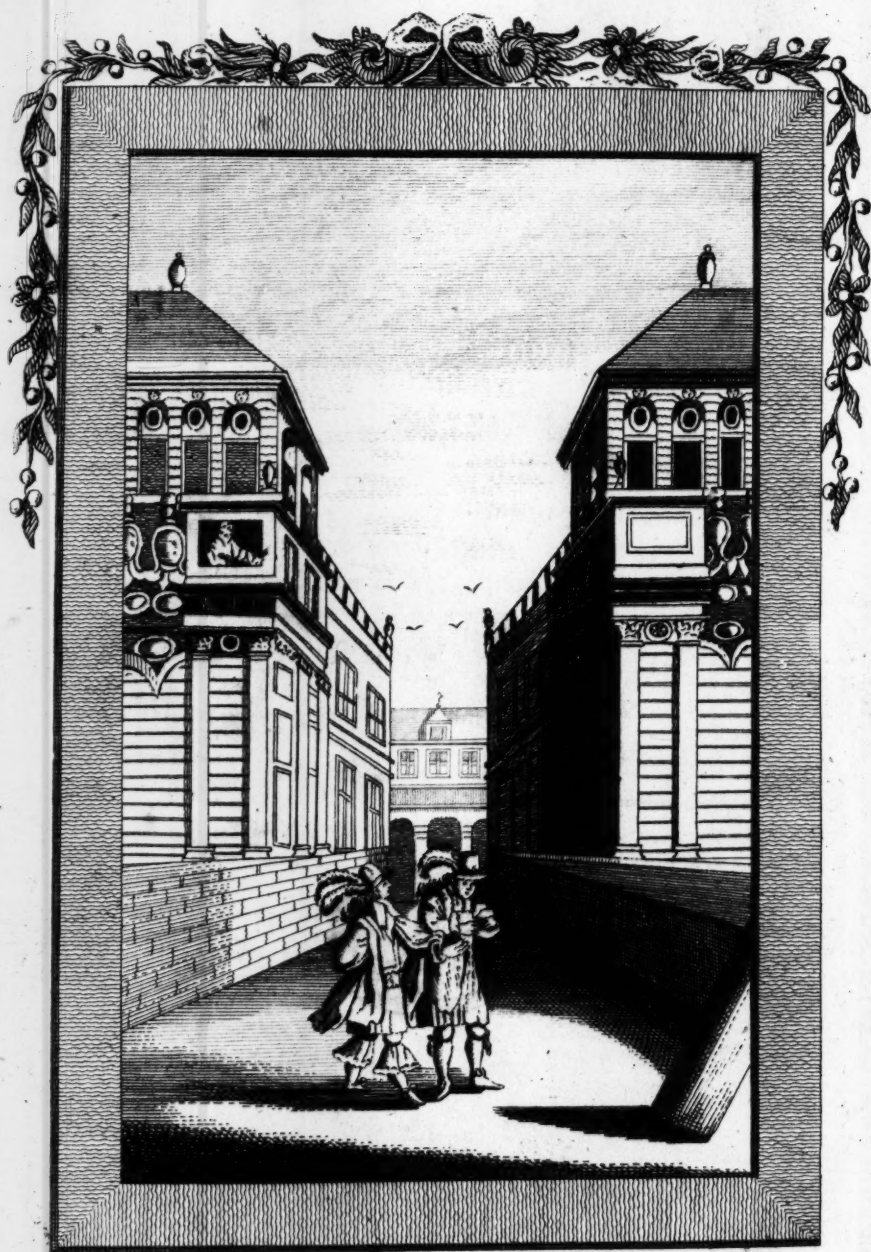
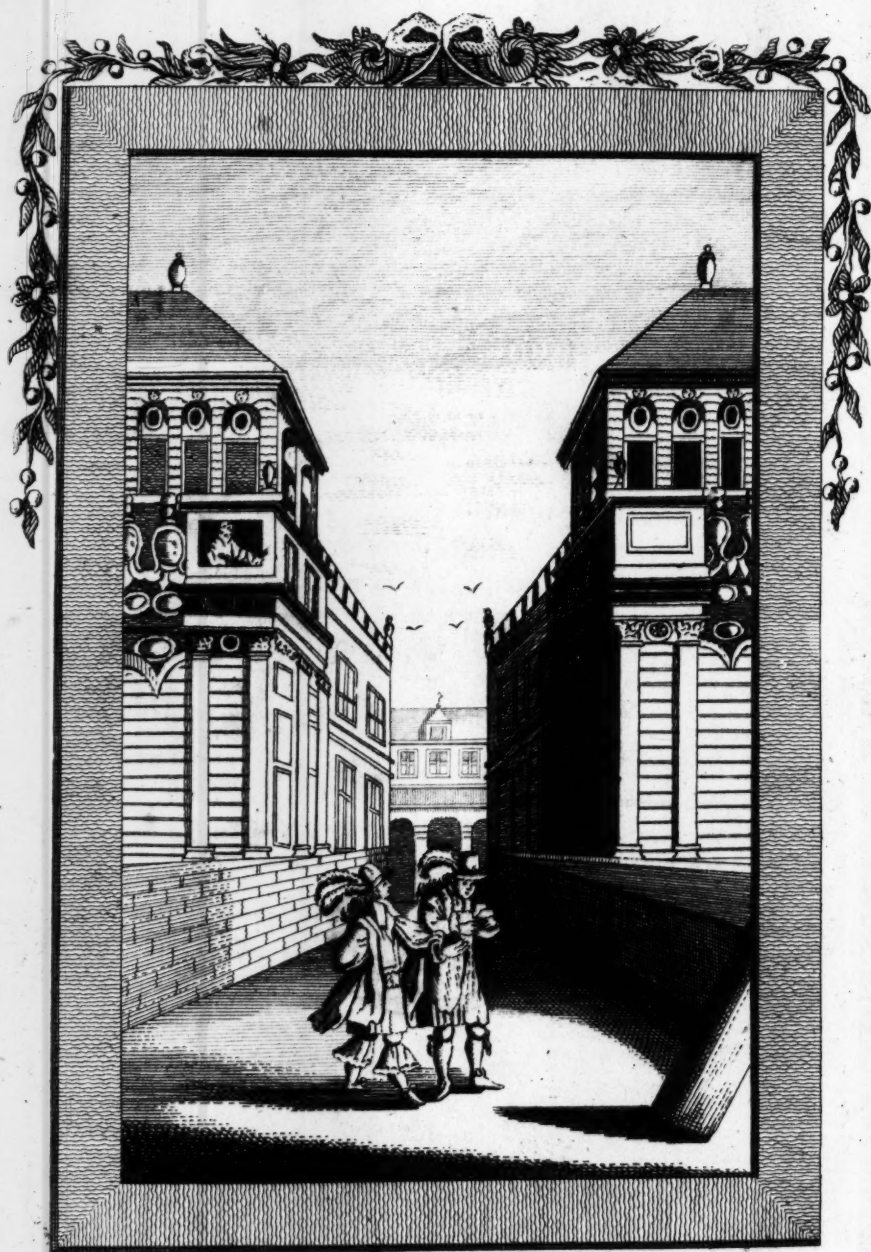






134
M E L I T E,

A

C O M E D Y.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

O F

P. CORNEILLE.



L O N D O N :

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ERASTUS, Lover of MELITE.

THYRSIS, Friend of ERASTUS.

PHILANDER, Lover of CLORIS.

MELITE, Beloved by ERASTUS and THYRSIS.

CLORIS, Sister of THYRSIS.

LISIS, Friend of THYRSIS.

CLITO, NURSE, &c.

M E L I T E.

ACT. I. SCENE I.

SCENE. PARIS.

ERASTUS and THYRSIS.

ERASTUS.

I OWN, my friend, my disorder is so incurable
That but one remedy offers for my relief;
And after the disdain Melite has treated me with,
It would be but just to quit her for another.
But in spite of all her cruelty, she rules with
Such powerful sway o'er my heart, that I dare
to murmur

Only in her absence. In vain, I use every effort to
Surmount this passion, and make a thousand
Resolutions when she is not present; for, I no sooner
See her again, but a single glance, rivets my
Fetters stronger, and throws such a pleasing and
delightful

Veil o'er my reason, that I pursue my disorder,
And fly from every remedy I proposed. But this
Flattering hope, this pleasing delusion only rekindles
Up my flame, and confirms me the more her slave.

THYRSIS.

An excellent discourse, and as admirably deli-
vered.

So

So, my dear friend then, to convince me of your eloquence,

You put on a most grave countenance and counterfeit

Misery and pain: and all this, for what? Is it not Erastus,

With a design to see how I shall condole and pity your

Unhappy state? no, no, my friend, think not that Thyrsis can ever strive to comfort thee on a Feigned grief, and accuse your dear Melite Of cruelty. Come, come, do I not perfectly know as well

As numbers else, how favourable you stand In her opinion.

ERASTUS.

Ah! Thyrsis, thou art deceived; the kind reception

She gives me, and my perseverance, has been the foundation

Of this false report. Her contempt is hid, and those who

Feel not her power, cannot know what I have to Combat with.

THYRSIS.

Prithee, what more would your love-sick heart Require than a favourable reception? is not that Enough.

ERASTUS.

This favourable reception, the same to all as well as me,

Only makes my torments greater. She patiently hears,

My vows and sighs, and yet when I speak to her of marriage

She turns aside, nor will hear it mentioned.

THYRSIS.

A truce with this dissimulation, grave Erastus. Marriage! your friend Thyrsis knows you are Not such a blockhead as to take her for thy wedded wife.

ERAS-

ERASTUS.

How, do you doubt of my intentions?

THYRSIS.

Not I, upon my word; I know both thy intentions and

Affections: the latter, I believe, are placed upon a fair

Face, regular features, and a pair of killing eyes, all which

Are perishable commodities, and therefore should be marketable

While they are in their prime;—but as for your intentions,

Why, faith, it would be extremely uncivil of a gentleman

So qualified for the lover as Erastus, to see so amiable A lady without saying a few amorous words.

To her. Thus confining your passion to a flattering Compliment only, your marriage design, I fancy, lies

Another way. Do not I know that many of the richest

And noblest families, would be glad of your alliance, and do not I?—

ERASTUS.

Stop, Thyrsis, your words are treason, to love so Pure as mine, which looks on sordid avarice

As a crime. Gold to me has no allurements, and the Person of my Melite, is to me, the greatest treasure

This earth can afford.

THYRSIS.

Egad, I begin to think thou art in earnest;

But, if that is the road you take for your love, it is Quite unbeaten, and only followed by those who have not

Sudied life. All those fine words are proper enough To take a lady's ear, and those a youthful love should

First learn. His speech should be entirely composed Of flames, hearts, passion, love, darts and the whole

I

Voca-

Vocabulary in Ovid's art of love. He should counterfeit

The pain, the brightness of her eyes occasion, and then

Intreat her to cure it : invoke Phœbus, promise
Impossibilities and miracles, and swear that no obstacle shall conquer

His ardent passion. In short, a lover may talk
And make as many oaths as he pleases, which
should be looked

Upon only as wind.

ERASTUS.

Leave such discourse for meaner beauties,
Such as Chrysolite, but my Melite must be treated
In another manner. Oh ! she is all that can
Be painted beautiful. Venus, the immortal goddess
Whose power is so great, hid her diminished head at
Melite's birth ; the graces descended from their
heavenly

Abode and accompanied her eyes, while the little
powerful

God of love, seated himself on every feature,
And made her smiles his darts.

THYRSIS.

Amazingly sublime, heroical and romantic :
Nay, I do not doubt but you could have lengthened
This emphatical and metaphorical speech much
Farther. Poor lover--unfortunate Erastus, I pity thee
From my soul. Dost thou not yet know, that the
More adorable the beauty before marriage, the more
It palls upon our appetite afterwards, and an object
Becomes of less value in our eyes

By possession. 'Tis true, at first we only throw out a
Thousand fooleries to a woman, but then 'tis only
to gain

Her favour, a charm of use to the lover, but of
none to the husband.

ERASTUS.

ERASTUS.

This disgraceful caprice, and these vain chimera's
Will never stagger the worthy mind. He that has
taken

A woman of honour to his bed, need never fear a
suborner's art.

THYRSIS.

Possibly you are in the right, but this choice is
so very difficult that it very often
Deceives the most cautious man. Hymen himself
Is so heavy and dismal a burthen, that we should
regard him

In the same light as death. To be all our live's
Fastened to one woman! to lose all our quiet and
Repose by undutiful children, whose number thocks
up the
Whole house! ah! my friend, he that loves such
a yoke

Admires it with but little reason.

ERASTUS.

Talk as thou list, yet marriage is the port we must
All one time or other arrive at: all must love, and
the libertine

How wild foe'er he may be, will be caught at last.
Thou, even thou Thyrsis, who now roams with
freedom

From fair to fair, will not escape the unerring dart
Of love.

THYRSIS.

And should Thyrsis ever marry, believe it will not
Be merely for the beauty of a face. No, I shall
regulate

My desires as my interest guides: should Doris's
purse be

Handsome and her features ugly, I should esteem her
More than the admired Phillis or Aminta. Her for-
tune would

To me be a sufficient balance for the other's beauty.
—This then, my friend, is the best way to love;
Believe me, there is no stronger bond for conjugal

Affec-

Affection than a weighty purse. Beauty, person,
Wit, air, and other accomplishments may warm
the heart,

But believe me, they will never heat the kitchen.
Hymen too, before so amiable, has many misera-
ble days

After ~~some~~ follies of love are over, and a long last-
ing friendship

Is very badly attempted to be raised on such weak
Foundations; while gold has a certain splendor
Which gives to the most ugly features a kind of
beautiful tint,

That lasts a longer time than the marriage of the
Mere love-sick pair.

ERASTUS.

Thy boastings are vain and idle, nor could even
Thyrsis

Keep his opinion, if he saw my lovely Melite.

THYRSIS.

Ha, ha, ha; no, no, my friend my opinion is un-
alterable,

I can withstand the power of the brightest eyes.

ERASTUS.

Lucky chance, here comes Melite; now summon
up all

Your courage, and fortify your heart against all
That's beautiful; for, notwithstanding all you have
Said, you'll be obliged to own I'm in the right.

S C E N E II.

ERASTUS, MELITE and THYRSIS.

ERASTUS.

Madam, your presence is fortunate to settle a
dispute

Between two friends. A slave to love defend its
power

Against a rebellious heart, that never yet has felt
its force.

All my arguments have not been sufficient to
conquer

His detraction, and no longer able to guard against
his subtlety, Must

Must leave to your eyes what was ineffectual to
my words.

MELITE.

You should rather say, he will find there somewhat
To confirm his aversion to love.

THYRSIS.

My heart already retracts my words, and I must
lament the fate of
Those who have unfortunately seen so much beauty.

MELITE.

Your compliment is unreasonable ;
I ne'er have been the cause of love to any one :
Nor never had that power.

ERASTUS.

Oh ! that power is but too great, behold be-
fore you
An unfortunate proof, who would glory in his
charms
If Melite would not so cruelly punish.

MELITE.

No more Melite, cease your idle complaints,
Nor at the expence of your understanding flatter me.

THYRSIS.

Madam, 'twould be ungrateful for you not to
Acknowledge the gifts which nature has given you.
That face, that air, all conspires to convince
The power of your charms. Let me then, madam,
Plead in Erastus's favour, nor with icy looks
Receive his burning flame.

MELITE.

And does a foe to love speak this language :
It would better suit your courage to assist your words
And practise the advice you give to others.

THYRSIS.

I now madam, acknowledge my error,
And own the power of beauty.

MELITE.

To find, you sir, retract your opinion on so
frivolous
A subject, makes me smile : but as flattery I detest,

I must

I must quit this present discourse. You gentlemen
Will excuse my absence.

ERASTUS.

In human fair, on whom my every
Happiness depends, wilt thou then leave me thus
In doubt and torment.

MELITE.

Leave Erastus, this idle discourse, nor
Longer trouble thyself and me, with what I will
not hear. [Exit.

S C E N E III.

ERASTUS.

She's gone, nor heeds my passion.
Ah! Thyrsis, what think'st thou of my fair, do I
deserve

The blame which late thou gav'st me?

THYRSIS.

Yes, she is indeed lovely. My heart till now
Insensible of love, with difficulty opposes
Its invincible power.

ERASTUS.

Rather freely own she has possession of your heart,
But that your honour wilt not suffer the name of
An unfaithful friend to be blended with the lover,
And that nothing but our friendship could make thee
Avoid it. Thy passion will shew itself, and shortly
We shall see proofs of it in your writings.

THYRSIS.

In fact, after the sight of so much beauty,
Who could avoid such a subject for his muse?
In faith Erastus, after the beholding of such ravishing
Charms what mortal could restrain his pen,
I always loved those plaintive strains, where sighs,
Tears, and torrents are depicted; of those in for-
mer times,
My muse has sung, but only knew the name and
sound,
The real power of love I had not felt.

Per.

M E L I T E.

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Permit my muse then, now Erastus to depict the
delightful
Flame with which you burn. Melite can receive
It as your own.

ERASTUS.

Ah! Thyrsis, in vain your friendship strives for
My interest yet speaks for itself. Nor do I doubt,
But while you endeavour to paint the power of my
love,
You will only utter thy own heartfelt sentiments.

THYRSIS.

May heaven exert its utmost vengeance on me,
If ever the thought of such a crime enters this friend-
ly breast.

ERASTUS.

Enough, I rest content, and rely upon thy word,
Thy honour, I know is too nice, to wrong your
friend. [Exit.

THYRSIS.

And yet I fear my treacherous heart will
Soon revolt. No power binds us to keep our word,
When love is in the way.

Urged by its power the best friends do prove,
That oaths, and promises, are slight to love.

SCENE IV.

PHILANDER and CLORIS.

PHILANDER.

And will my Cloris not forgive a fault arising
From my love? will her anger still continue?

CLORIS.

The pardon follows the offence, since I find
Philander innocent.

Oh! my Cloris, thou adorable object of my flame,
How my heart is o'erwhelmed with the excesses of
Your charms. I try to find some defect of nature,
In thy person, but in vain, the more I gaze,
The more I am enthrall'd, thy beauty, judgment,
Wit, and temper, all, all conspire to charm me.

CLO

CLORIS.

And Cloris own's she's pleased, to think that
After this alarm, thy deceived imagination,
Returns thee to thy love, never more I hope
To change.

PHILANDER.

Thy beauty will speak my perseverance, nor
Need my farther vows, assure you of
My fidelity. But I should despise the wretches whose
Faith was only kept alive thro' promises: thy charms
So perfect, will bind this heart for ever, nay, would
Render constant the gayest libertine.

CLORIS.

Cease, Philander from thy praises, my affection,
Rest assured of, as long as thou'rt faithful. But
while,

Thou art so lavish on my person, thy passion loses half
Its power by flattery. False praise is only secret
Blame. If I appear agreeable in thine eyes, 'tis
All I ask, and the greatest happiness to which
I can aspire.

PHILANDER.

This goodness overcomes me, yet midst the
pleasure
With which my heart rebounds, I still hang wavering
Between hope and fear. Therefore, my lovely Cloris
Since our love is mutual and in pity to the sufferings,
I have long endured, name the day shall make
Philander happy.—

CLORIS.

Cease thy transports, I see my brother.

S C E N E V.

THYRSIS, PHILANDER, and CLORIS.

THYRSIS.

If I may believe appearances,
My presence here might be dispensed with.

PHILANDER.

What are thy thoughts then. Thyrsis?

THYRSIS.

THYRSIS.

Not to conceal my thoughts, Philander,
 You both appear so happy with each other, that it
 Would not require the aid of a forcerer, to devine,
 How importunate a third person must at present
 prove.

CLORIS.

You have full liberty to say what you will, since
 The flame, with which we burn is not criminal.
 And to convince thee of the truth of my assertion,
 Thy consent is only wanting to fix the day for
 Our mutual happiness.

THYRSIS.

That sister you may rest assured of, but I
 Believe, my pretty Cloris, has thought
 The day already too long deferred, and would have
 Not been greatly disoblighd it had been sooner.

CLORIS.

You are jocular brother, and seem in a mighty
 Good humour. May I request the subject.

THYRSIS.

The thought of rendering my sister happy, will
 Always make me so.

CLORIS.

Ah! Thyrsis that is not all.

THYRSIS.

True, it is not all, I own Cloris, I have
 Seen——

CLORIS.

What?

THYRSIS.

One, my sister, whom if Philander had seen with
 My eyes, thy affairs, I assure you, would have been
 But in in a bad situation.

CLORIS.

Your servant, sweet brother, but I am possessed,
 Of too much vanity, to think that Philander's heart,
 Will ever be surprized by another.

K

THYR-

THYRSIS.

A truce with thy vanities, and rest upon my word,
That the object I have seen, far, far surpasses you.

PHILANDER.

Thyrsis, speak with more respect of the object of
My flame. That blasphemy in another's mouth,
Would have risked a life.

THYRSIS.

Oh, her beauty is beyond.—

CLORIS.

Prithee brother, stop your enthusiasm, and let us
Know this beauty's name.

THYRSIS.

Not so fast, not so fast, good sister: 'tis not such
an easy

Matter to get this secret from my breast—but I
Fear I have already been too importunate, so I shall
leave

You to the mercy of love; and you, Philander, to your
Brunette—farewell.—

CLORIS.

A secret! but he must not think thus to avoid
My inquiries; no, I will closely follow his
Steps, and watch all his motions; but I'll discover it. (going.)

PHILANDER (Stopping CLORIS)

Is it thus then you would quit a lover, to follow
A brother for an idle curiosity.

CLORIS.

Excuse me for a moment, Philander, my curiosity
Will prove no infidelity to thee. Let me but at
present

Seek to discover this secret, we will laugh together
At the flame with which this brother of mine
Consumes, who so long has been the foe to love.

ACT

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

ERASTUS.

'Tis true, then—I had rightly judged his unfaithful

Heart, would not be proof against this cruel Fair one, who treats all her lovers with disdain, And only shews her favours to the last that offers. No sooner did he see her, but I marked his visage, And read the presage of his disloyal friendship. My whole frame struck with an unknown trembling Foreboded my misfortune. Since that time, This fickle friend avoids my sight, and if chance Throws him in my way, my speech confounds him, And his disordered senses answers me but with difficulty :

Melite too, regards him with the utmost pleasure : The name of Thyrsis betrays her passion, her sighs And broken words, her praises of him all evince it : His perfections please her, and his flatteries alone Charms her ear : No longer now they hide their real Flame, but the open day is witness to their meetings ; Last night I surprized the traitor with Melite, And marked the content that sat on either brow ! Quit then this love, this friendly respect, Erastus, and Seek for exemplary vengeance on both their Treacherous heads. But 'twill be better to conceal My anger, and by rallying of their flame, evince My sentiments.

S C E N E II.

ERASTUS and MELITE.

ERASTUS.

What, alone madam, without the amiable
Thyrsis ? really
It is amazing your new lover should so easily
Quit you, when so fair an opportunity offers of
recounting
The excess of his fervent love.

MELITE.

MELITE.

You know then the state of Thyrsis's heart ?

ERASTUS.

Perfectly, since he has seen Melite, his mind
Is pleas'd with the remembrance of her charms ;
And his only pleasure now is with the object he
So much esteems.

MELITE.

And has he not a right to please himself ? love
To him, as well as to me, appears a punishment :
And his coldness plainly shews he is resolv'd never
To love.——

ERASTUS.

Any but Melite.

MELITE.

I have no such vanity, to think that any merit
I possess, can conquer his obdurate heart.

ERASTUS.

Yet madam, 'twould suit Melite to have some for
This new adorer of her charms. Yes, madam, I
perceive
Your love for Thyrsis :—but your aversion towards
me, shall no longer
Trouble this heart. I know you see him, hear him
and hang
Upon his words : can I then doubt where your
affection
Lies, and can Erastus e'er expect Melite to hear his
passion.

MELITE.

And should Thyrsis e'er talk to me as Erastus
Has done, no longer would I admit his presence.

ERASTUS.

But, madam, if new objects thus perpetually
changes
Your affection, think that Thyrsis as well as me
Will alter both his temper and his language. At
Present beloved as soon as seen, his passion heard
with pleasure,

Looks

Looks from the object he adores, that but too well
 Explain his happiness; can he complain? or
 Murmur at his fate, like me.

MELITE.

Erastus, cease this jealous disposition, nor longer
 Let such frenzy torment your brain.
 Leave me with freedom to my own inclinations,
 Nor attempt to govern my disposition.
 Who made you the censor of my actions?
 Must I be accountable to your chagrin?

ERASTUS.

No, madam, but in spite of all my power,
 In spite of all the slights you have shewn towards me
 I cannot avoid reddening with shame for your
 Behaviour. The world, Melite, the world already
 Speaks of the too great privacy you allow him.

MELITE.

'Think on your own concerns, nor rest uneasy
 On my behaviour.

ERASTUS.

'Tis enough, madam: henceforth I throw off
 every
 Anxious thought for a woman I once adored:
 But thinkest thou, I could without regret see thee
 Deaf to the lawful prayers of honourable men, yet
 Ready to attend to those of a suborner.

MELITE.

I can no longer bear to hear your slanderous
 tongue:
 Your jealous fears drives you almost to madness.
 Farewel, Erastus! but remember, thy wrong as-
 permons
 Pleads for Thyrsis more than you imagine. [Exit.

S C E N E III.

ERASTUS.

So this then is all my painful services deserves?
 Is it thus my flame, is recompensed by cruelty and
 Disdain? and can you prefer a traiterous friend to
 Erastus

Eraſtus—but think not thy baſeneſs, though by
reſentment

Urged, I'll publickly expoſe. 'Twould only feed
thy pride,

And too greatly evince the abject love with which I
Burn. No, I'll revenge myſelf by other means, and
Appear with indifference to both.—But O, thou
unfaithful

Friend, reſt aſſured, thy hour is not far diſtant,
when by

A cunning equal to thy crimes, diſorder ſhall reign
Where thou looked for nought but quiet and reſpoſe.
I know a crafty, venal and deſigning acquaintance
Of Melite, ever ready to commit any act for thoſe
Who pays her well, nor thinks aught unjuſt where
Interest is concerned. To her I'll go, and without
delay,

Give ſpeedy revenge to my irritated mind. [Exit.

S C E N E IV.

THYRSIS and CLORIS.

THYRSIS.

Siſter, I muſt requeſt your opinion of theſe few
Lines I have jumbled together in favour of the
miſtreſs

Of my friend. See if thou knoweſt her, and whe-
ther my

Heavy muſe has accommodated the words to the
Paſſions of another. (Reads.)

“What beauty with Melite can compare.”

CLORIS.

Ah! brother, it is ſufficient.

THYRSIS.

Peace, Cloris, thy too haſty interruption
Is not ſupportable. (Reads.)

“What beauty with Melite can compare,

“Than my paſſion what ſtronger can prove,

“So matchleſs her charms, I declare,

“Can be equalled by nought but my love.

“Tho'

" Tho' new beauties appear to my eyes,
 " Though her coldness embitters my heart,
 " Too cruel, she hears not my sighs,
 " Too lovely, she rivets the dart.
 " But no wonder she's deaf to my flame,
 " To the pow'r of the god I submit,
 " Since I love's whole power must feel,
 " But she only beauty and wit."

CLORIS.

And so these lines were compos'd for Erastus !

THYRSIS.

Yes, I have there depicted the flame with which he
burns.

CLORIS.

Or, rather what you feel in your own breast.

THYRSIS.

Thou know'st me well, Cloris, and that my
 humour,
 Free and volatile, has no other part in them than
 that of being the author.

CLORIS.

Poor brother, there needs no more than thy silence
 And the language of thy eyes to excuse thee; they, in
 Spite of all, plainly evince how much your heart
 Sighs for Melite.

THYRSIS.

For Melite ?

CLORIS.

Yes, for Melite, who by the appearance of thy muse
 Seems to feel for you not the least spark of that
 Passion you have depicted.

THYRSIS.

My muse then has led you into an egregious error,
 And thy wife conjectures have deceived you.
 What, think'st thou that the attraction of a pair of fine
 Blue eyes, or a delicate complexion, can have any
 power
 Over my gay and volatile disposition. No, my muse
 is only

A faithful

A faithful portrait of what Erastus suffers for this hard
Hearted female.

CLORIS.

Prithee, brother, if that is really the case, and thou
Dost not feel the least passion for Melite, evince it
By moderating that joy which appears in your
countenance,

And other strong symptoms of your love plainly visible

THYRSIS.

Well then, Cloris, I will own that notwithstanding
All my friendship for Erastus, I cannot conquer this
Fatal passion. By turns by friendship urged, by turns
By love, my wavering mind is tossed. Sometimes I
Am the friend, and then the rival, and often blush
That I must be either perfidious to Erastus, or in-
sensible to

Melite's charms. My troubled soul divided between
These two contrary passions, knows not which way to
Act.

CLORIS.

A very pretty and winding discourse to convince me
That love has conquered you against your will.

But I know too well, that in the present times

Mankind only serves their friends in

Those matters where their own interest is not
concern'd.—But to the point,

Uneasiness, and friendship aside, you fear lest so
strong

An advocate as gold, should plead more powerful in
Melite's breast, than thy passion.

THYRSIS.

Thou hast devined the real cause of all my fears.

CLORIS.

And of these hideous fears Cloris will relieve thee.
Tell me, Thyrsis, how long has Erastus attended on
Melite.

THYRSIS.

For upwards of two years he has rendered homage
To her beauty..

CLORIS.

CLORIS.

But has he offered her marriage?

THYRSIS.

He never sees her but he presses her on that theme.

CLORIS.

Then let him press on,

Nor let that unhappy lover give you the least
Uneasiness: believe me, however rich he may be,
Melite dislikes him; for after two years of submissive
Love paid to a female, if he was not the object of
Her hate, she would accept the hand where the heart
Was offered with it.

THYRSIS.

But the absolute power of her mother ———

CLORIS.

Think already then your business finished?
If the mother is violent, and would force her,
She'll fly for rescue to another lover's arms.

THYRSIS.

My fears are diminished, and my pain appeased,
I fly to know my fate. Farewel, then, Cloris,
And may I meet with as favourable a reception with
Melite, as Philander has with you. [Exit.

CLORIS.

Success attend you. But what makes Philander
Stay. The slothful lover should meet with some
Rebuke; my frowns perhaps may learn him
To speed his lingering steps another time.

[Exit.

S C E N E V.

ERASTUS and CLITO.

ERASTUS (giving him a letter.)

Go, seek Philander; tell him that Melite has
Described her passion in this epistle: tell him
That she could no longer conceal the flame with
Which she burns.—But be cautious, play thy
Part like an accomplished actor; observe his colour,

L

Air,

Air, his speech and looks: let not a motion escape
your

Notice, that we may know his mind by his emotion.

CLITO.

It shall be done.

ERASTUS.

And, harkee, Clito,

Use all your address to gain his confidence,

CLITO.

Rely, fir, upon my fidelity?

I warrant you, in spite of all his resolution, he
Falls into the pit.—But, fir, you know——

ERASTUS.

Here, fly, be diligent; (gives him a purse.)
Common souls have only money for their end.
But return as soon as possible.

CLITO.

Have but a little patience, fir, and you may hear
Every particular from his own mouth.

ERASTUS.

How?

CLITO.

Quick, conceal yourself behind this corner, I
See Philander coming: from thence you can, when
Occasion requires, appear and assist my undertaking.
But see, he comes;—to your concealment.

S C E N E VI.

PHILANDER and CLITO. (ERASTUS listening.)

PHILANDER.

What a reception from Cloris? The means of
Pleading my excuse—

CLITO.

I am happy, fir, in meeting you so a-pro-pos
To discharge my trust. (gives him a letter.)

PHILANDER.

What is this?

CLITO.

CLITO.

You will find, fir, in that letter, a happinefs
Offered to you, the greatest man on earth would
wish for.

PHILANDER (opens the letter, and reads.)

" IN spite of all the duty and decorum of my
" sex, this epistle has escaped my pen in favour of
" your acknowledged merit. Know then, Melite
" writes this, and loves Philander. If she is so
" happy as to receive a reciprocal affection, Philander
" will at present be contented with this epistolary
" correspondence, until she has removed the pre-
" judice of her mother for another person.

" MELITE."

ERASTUS, (feigning to have overlooked him as he
read the letter.)

'Tis true, then, that the beautiful Melite
Has made a worthy choice of the brave Philander;
And, that he from his merit alone has obtained
What Thyrsis and Erastus in vain have sought.
Indeed, my regret for her refusal of my love is
Greatly diminished by so good a choice: besides,
Her coldness towards me, has made me weary
So long of offering my vows in vain, and glad to be
Released by so good a pretext.

PHILANDER.

What, say'st thou, Thyrsis adores Melite? that
Rebel to the power of love.

ERASTUS.

With the utmost ardour he consumes with his
Passion.

PHILANDER.

If then, Erastus, thou withdraw'st thy heart,
Withdraw it in favour of thy friend: but, upon
My regard for Melite, I would not have you
Rely. My love, already fixed, can never look
towards

Another,

Another. And all that I can do, is to endeavour
To turn her esteem for me towards my Cloris's
brother.

ERASTUS.

What is thy Cloris when compared with Melite?

PHILANDER.

Erastus must pay more respect to her I love.

ERASTUS.

I will allow, that Cloris is lovely, young, and witty;
But not comparable to the divine beauty that
Now offers you her heart.

PHILANDER.

Whether her beauty surpasses her's I love, or not,
I cannot change; my heart is fixed on one,
And is insensible to all the world beside.

ERASTUS.

Consider the advantage that will accrue; her
Riches will counterbalance your love for Cloris.

PHILANDER.

Shameful motive! No, Cloris meets me
With an equal flame; nor can this proffered
Love of Melite be so true as her's.

ERASTUS.

Philander, undeceive yourself, place
Both Melite and Cloris in their proper light,
And see the difference of their love.
Melite, in her love for you, exposes herself
To a contemptuous denial: while the other
Loved you not till you was first smitten.
One is beloved by abundance of adorers, yet
Fixes her choice on thee, in preference to all the rest.
The other, receiving no other addresses but thine,
Accepts the choice, because no other offers.
This ———

PHILANDER.

Farewell, Erastus, so unimportant are
Thy arguments, they cannot shake my constancy.
Expect to see me here again in a couple (aside to Clito)
Of hours, when I'll return an answer.

CLITO.

CLITO.

Freely dispose of my poor abilities.

[Exit.

ERASTUS. (alone)

He may attempt to disguise his real sentiments,
 Yet I plainly see the bait is swallowed. Cloris
 No longer has the power she had o'er his heart
 An hour ago. Oh! blest revenge! Thus
 My subtlety by one artful stroke will
 Render both the brother and the sister miserable.

S C E N E VII.

THYRSIS, ERASTUS, MELITE.

THYRSIS.

Erastus, stop, a word with you.

ERASTUS.

What has Thyrsis to say?

THYRSIS.

To give Erastus the verses that he promised him.

MELITE (apart while Erastus reads.)

What can they both be discoursing about? This
 jealousy

Between them will produce a quarrel, and the
 Compliments they now pay each other, are perhaps
 Only civilities they disown in their hearts.

ERASTUS, (returning Thyrsis the verses.)

Another time, Thyrsis, some pressing business at
 Present hinders me from accepting of them.
 Your muse may elsewhere find a better messenger.

THYRSIS, (alone.)

Very concise, truly: heavens! what a humour
 The man is in. Cold looks, frowns, and
 An abrupt departure, are all the thanks I am to
 Receive for racking my brain to hammer out these
 Few lines. If now I had not but a good assurance,
 I'd deliver them to his mistress myself, and take this
 Favourable opportunity to acquaint her what
 power her

Eyes have o'er my heart. Alas! that I should be so
 Confoundedly overtaken with this cursed modesty!

Ah!

Ah! there she is now, and I dare not, for the blood
and foul
Of me, utter a single syllable. Her looks strikes me
dumb.
Ha, she comes this way; would to God she'd break
The ice first.

S C E N E VIII.

THYRSIS and MELITE.

MELITE.

You are contemplating, sir; you will excuse my
Interruption, in demanding what has so abruptly
robbed
Us of the company of your friend.

THYRSIS.

That, madam, is beyond my comprehension;
For scarce had I opened my mouth, but the fantastical
Spark turned upon his heel, and left me.

MELITE.

My appearance, perhaps, occasioned this sudden
Departure: sure never a lover was like Eraustus.
Uneasy at every one that speaks to me but himself;
He never meets me but with reproaches. And you,
even his
Avowed friend, cannot see me without giving him
offence.

THYRSIS.

And his anger is the lightest of all my troubles.
Could I but gain Melite's favour, a legion of rivals
Like to Eraustus, would not turn aside my love.

MELITE.

Such discourse from Thyrsis I must not hear,
Eraustus——

THYRSIS.

Talk not of Eraustus; consult your own will.
Must you, who possesses a supreme power
Over every heart, not have the disposal of her own?
Love of all passions owns no law, nor rule,
Nor counsel, but what it dictates of itself.

ME-

MELITE.

I own then, Thyrsis, tho' 'tis my sex's nature
to conceal
Their passion, that thy merit stronger than
Thy flattering arguments, renders me less scrupulous
Of giving up Eraustus. I perhaps may say
Too much, and shew myself a too easy conquest.
But Thyrsis by that will see, the strength
Of my affection by the confidence I repose in him.

THYRSIS.

What joy! what love o'erflows my elated heart
At this acknowledgement. Yes, Melite, you shall
find me true,
Faithful and sincere: since I am not despised
By you, my chiefest care, shall be to wait upon
Your pleasure, and gratify the least of your desires.
This sonnet which I wrote for Eraustus, will better
Speak my flame, than I at present can.

MELITE.

I accept it, as the precious token of your love,
But I must leave you, I hear my mother's voice,
Farewell! and be faithful, in spite of the jealous
Eraustus. [Exit.

THYRSIS.

Heavens! sure never man was so happy, and since,
Eraustus was first offended, I'll change my friendship
For him, into a more stronger passion for his mistress,
In vain we boast of friendship's powerful sway,
All yield to love; and all, it's power obey.
[Exit.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

PHILANDER.

Thou hast conquered, Melite, it is impossible any
Longer to be insensible to such a multitude of favours.
Those letters where without disguise thy thoughts,
Are painted: those wherein thy whole heart is
Written, have charmed all my senses; their

De-

Delightful promises, are preferable to the endearments

Of Cloris. But Melite I offend thee, by mentioning
'The name' of her, who so long has rendered me
blind to

Thy adorable charms.

Importunate remembrance, why in spite of all
My efforts, dost thou place before my eyes a portrait I
Would feign efface. Fly then from my mind, nor
Longer trouble my ardent transports: return to Cloris,
Tell her from me, that she now is free to make
another

Choice, that I no longer burn for her, or if a
Spark of love remains, I wish it may be extinguish'd,
Tell her that Melite, like a goddess rules with
Sovereign sway over all our desires, disposes of
Our hearts, compels our wills, and that all our
designs by

Her surmounted, think themselves too happy to obey
Her orders. Tell her that's all my vows.—

S C E N E II.

PHILANDER and THYRSIS.

THYRSIS.

Philander.

PHILANDER.

Who calls Philander.

THYRSIS.

Thyrsis, whose fortune now at its utmost height,
Cannot be perfect, till he has made thee a partner of
his happiness.

PHILANDER.

Your confidence I respect as an honour.

THYRSIS.

'Twould be imprudence in me to attempt to
Dissemble or conceal what my eyes would but render
Too apparent.

PHILAN-

PHILANDER.

Indeed if I can judge by your countenance, if I
 can read
 Your thoughts in your eyes, they express a most
 amazing
 Joy, that I cannot even form a subject expressive
 Enough of the signs I see.

THYRSIS.

If the signs only surprizes thee, what then will
 the real occasion
 Of them do? my fortune is greater than can be
 imagined:
 Beloved by a fair one, beautiful, sensible, genteel,
 Witty and whose charms might strike the most
 Obdurate heart.

PHILANDER.

If she is such as you have painted her, your choice
 Is good; but—

THYRSIS.

But what?

PHILANDER.

Dost thou love her?

THYRSIS.

Love her, by heavens, nought can equal
 The flame with which I burn.

PHILANDER.

And this beautiful Damsel—

THYRSIS.

Feels the same passion for your humble servant,
 But why these questions?

PHILANDER.

Only to remind you, that a beautiful
 Face is very often no more than the hypocritical
 Mask of a bad heart.

THYRSIS.

Oh! but my——

PHILANDER.

Stop, Thyrsis, I have observed many of their sex
 Have seen some who have seemed to be all ice, yet

M

Burnt

Burnt with a concealed flame, which increased
The more it was confined. Others, I have seen who
Under the fatal appearance of proofs of love,
Which they did not feel, have lulled the passion
Of their lovers by their pretended flame. But
I have seen very few whose passion answered
To their faces.

THYRSIS.

Yet, of the last you speak of my face must be
numbered
For I hold myself as sure possessed of her heart,
As you do of my sisters.

PHILANDER.

From that very reason, believe me Thyrsis
Both our lives will be attended with a like event.

THYRSIS.

If I should not be happy I am greatly deceived.

PHILANDER.

To humour thee, then, I will not damp your
Flattering expectations. But prithee, who is this
amiable fair one?

THYRSIS.

Melite.

PHILANDER.

Melite?

THYRSIS.

Ay, no other than that beautiful maid to whom
Every heart is turned.

PHILANDER.

And you met with a favourable reception.

THYRSIS.

Reception. A perfect love has too many signs
For a lover not to observe. A glance, a look, a--

PHILANDER.

Ridiculous favours, idle tokens,
Which only serve to deceive too credulous minds.
Had you no other proofs?

THYR-

THYRSIS.

Her word and plighted faith.

PHILANDER.

And are those all mere trifles. You should tell
me of an

Amiable tenderness, little kindnesses

And all those proofs of love, which should be joined
to such

Promises you speak of. You should be possessed

Of letters, her hand-writing, to confirm you of her
Love.

THYRSIS.

Let those who chuse them seek such idle trifles,
Which are not always real proofs; for my part
I have her word, nor do I desire more.

PHILANDER.

If that is all then, I believe, I know a friend of
Your's, who has more interest in her breast than you.

THYRSIS.

I know who thou mean'st, but that rival
Has more to complain of than rejoice;
Erastus who has met with her rigorous disdain—

PHILANDER.

No, no, there thou'rt perfectly mistaken, I
speak of
Another less unfortunate than he.

THYRSIS.

I know only of Erastus that loves her.

PHILANDER.

To keep thee no longer in suspense, even while
Your loving Melite was amusing you with her
Words, an unknown rival possesses all her
Heart, and the dissembler, in contempt of your
flame

Has each day by letters proffered herself to him.

THYRSIS.

'Tis treason all, Melite holds such an action in
utter abhorrence.

PHILANDER.

In pity then, and to draw thee from this error
I lately received this letter, read it, and there
You'll find how likely your success may prove.

“ Letter.

"Letter suppos'd from MELITE to PHILANDER."

"I begin to set a greater value on myself, since
 "I have the happiness of pleasing you, and my
 "glass offends me in not representing me beauti-
 "ful enough, to merit your affection. I would
 "also have you know that Melite thinks only to
 "possess thy heart, as an extraordinary recom-
 "pence from an excess of love, with which she
 "endeavours to supply the defect of the graces
 "heaven has denied her,"

PHILANDER,

What say'st thou now, Thyrsis? does her senti-
 ments not
 Sting thee?

THYRSIS.

Not in the least, the letter being in thy hands,
 gives me
 Not the least uneasiness.

PHILANDER,

The reason?

THYRSIS.

The bearer knowing the friendship I have
 For you, has in gallantry left it in your possession,
 Knowing there is nothing hid between two perfect
 friends.

PHILANDER,

You flatter yourself in too great a manner, and
 seem
 To be fond of your own deception. But, I believe
 I can find another of these epistles, which, belonging
 To you, should be certainly restored to the real
 owner. See there.

(gives Thyrsis another letter.)

THYRSIS. (reads)

"You have nought to fear from Thyrsis; I
 "only permit his company, that his faults may be
 "more striking to my mother; after which Phi-
 "lander and Melite will be at leisure to laugh to-
 "gether

“ gether at the simple imaginations with which
“ both the brother and sister have fed their ex-
“ pectations.”

PHILANDER.

Now, Thyrsis, dost thou think those letters
Were addressed to thee?

THYRSIS.

Traitor, is it thus, then, that the flight you
pay my
Sister, must only serve you as a subject for your
laughter?
Is it thus too, Melite forfeiting her word, only
makes a
Jest of so black a perjury; and is it thus you suborn
My love without a blush? Villain, if thy courage
Dare to support thy crime, follow me—a
Sudden punishment shall succeed thy treacherous
actions.

PHILANDER.

If, by being undeceived, your rashness impels
You to throw away your life, let thy despair seek
Some other to do you the favour. As for your
Humble servant —

THYRSIS.

Coward, dost thou fear to draw to thy sword?

PHILANDER.

No, not absolutely afraid to draw my sword,
But only timorous for the consequences, I have not
The least notion Thyrsis, of being obliged to
fly my
Country, and leave the object of my love, because
you chuse
To die. Besides, we fight at great disadvantage
if you
Are killed. Why it is not much matter, the loss
is not
So great, as only one person is lost: but if I die,
Another's life is lost with mine; Melite
Never could survive me.

THYR-

THYRSIS.

Vain coxcomb, thy want of courage, and thy reasons,
Are both shameful proofs of your baseness. But,
Once for all, follow me, or I will stigmatize thee to
Public view as a notorious coward, who dare
Not venture his life in support of his honour.

PHILANDER.

As for my life, why that is no longer in my
Disposal; but since I find you will not hear reason,
Why, faith, I had rather part with my mistress,
Than my life; therefore this evening will take my
Leave of Melite.—So farewell. [Exit.

THYRSIS.

Farewel, and remember you keep your word.

S C E N E III.

THYRSIS.

Perfidious wretch! thy cowardice protects you!
To what mean actions will the coward stoop!
These letters, left in my possession, and which
Philander

Regards only as superfluous favours, would be to me
An inestimable blessing. These letters, which are the
Witnesses of all our shame, only proves Melite's
False disposition, Philander's perjury, and my
deficiency

Of judgment, in being thus deceived.—It is but
Just, such an unfaithful wretch as Philander, should
Meet with such a traitress as Melite, for quitting
Cloris.

Yet, I believed the false appearances with which she
Fed my frivolous hopes. I believed her looks,
her eyes

Filled with love, spoke the sentiments of her
treacherous

Heart. O heavens! that so much deceit should
ever exist

Under

Under so fair a form, to cheat mankind!—It
cannot be:

So much beauty could not be false.—Did not Melite
Own her love, nay, swear I might rely on her
affection?

Why am I then so credulous, to believe this deceitful
Fable, this forgery with which he would deceive me;
But all his efforts are in vain.—Her words own
that she

Loved; and that sweet remembrance rekindles up
my flame.

I know not what to think or credit; her words
now fix

Me that she's true—then her letters, her very name
pleads

Against her.—Away, then, with this flame which
flatters me

That she is true.—Alas! I now too plainly see her
volatile

Disposition. Her pledged words are flown, and
her pen

Speaks strongly against her. Have not I here the
Shameful image of her flame, where the disgraceful
Offer of her heart only fills mine with rage.

O! I shall start out to madness, and all my troubled
Senses are loaded with a mortal grief.—But let me
Be calm, let me conceal my shame, and if I must die,
Let it be in secret, that my guilt may not give her
Treacherous soul the vanity of asserting I died for her.

S C E N E IV.

THYRSIS and CLORIS.

CLORIS.

How, does my brother turn from me! Gods,
What a change.—You seem not to know me, now
turn

Pale, then red, while your wandering eyes shews
some

Inward

Inward trouble. If Cloris ever merited a brother's
love

Let her know what affliction now torments him.

THYRSIS.

Since thou wouldst know the cause of my present
Emotion, thou shalt hear it. But, before I
Acquaint thee with my fate, prepare to hear
What I dread will but too much afflict you.—
In one word, we both are unfortunate; both our
Love's are crossed, and only made a jest of.—Phi-
lander.—

Alas! grief stifles my speech; farewell then Cloris,
Farewel, I can speak no farther; take these letters
And read both our fates.

CLORIS.

But let not your disordered mind—

THYRSIS.

Let me intreat you, Cloris.—

CLORIS.

How, shall I then leave thee to the rash effect of
Melancholy and distraction: no, before thou
resolvedst to die

Let me read the cause of all this trouble.

CLORIS. (after having read the letters.)

And is this all the cause of your chagrin?
What, must you be offended, because this unfaith-
ful fair

One throws off the mask, and shews you how
greatly you

Have been deceived? learn the subtlety of love
better

For the future, and know that artful women sel-
dom discover

The bottom of their thoughts. Their eyes too, aid-
ing their

Disguise, gives them the power of artfully deluding.

There are other females as beautiful as Melite,

Deserves your love; be not then uneasy at losing

This flighty, changeable maid, but seek for

Ano-

Another who is more sincere and faithful. Fickle
as the

Wind, she never could fix her choice, and Damon,
Ariander,

Geront and Eraſtus by turns have been her ſlaves.

You, Thyſis, have alſo joined the band, and
Philander

Now is the object of her wiſhes. But why do I
ſay now ?

—Perhaps, already ſome other youth ſupplants
him.

Think then, Melite with all her charms, no more
Than the gay coquet, whoſe heart accompanies
not her

Tongue. Infidelity is her favourite ſyſtem,
And to a man of ſenſe her beauty being join'd
With ſo fickle a mind, would have no attractions.

THYRSIS.

Think not to ſtop my fatal deſign by thy re-
proaches ?

And whether they are truths or falſities

You only redouble my pain inſtead of

Relieving me. Farewel ! none but death can

Give me eaſe.

[Exit.

CLORIS.

Yet, Thyſis ſtop.—he's gone, and whither
will his

Deſpair drive him. Preſerve me, heavens, from
Such raſhneſs. An inconstant lover has left me, —
I will leave him too ; my anxiety for the loſs would
But render his triumph greater. Thoſe that
Afflict themſelves for the loſs of a lover, give only
More advantage to thoſe who ſlight them.

Let me act better, and by braving his inconstancy,
Shew him he was of too ſlight importance to

Give me any pain. Let then, Philander, pay his
Adorations to the ſhrine that pleaſes him, if he
expects

That I ſhould mourn his loſs, he is much miſtaken.

Oh ! that my brother, would bear it with as much

N

Reſolu-

Resolution as I do ; I'll endeavour to find him
Out, and once more try to divert his attention from
This fickle fair : how dearly
Does the thought of revenge delight me. These
Letters will furnish me with an opportunity of
Gratifying it : in them I shall have sufficiency to
Disturb their hearts.—But here comes one, who
Willingly would avoid me.

S C E N E VI.

PHILANDER and CLORIS.

CLORIS.

How, Philander, do you pass me without a single look.

PHILANDER.

Some pressing business, madam, prevents me from
Enjoying this fortunate interview as I could wish

CLORIS.

Must I then love more than I am loved : my whole
Thoughts are on Philander.—

PHILANDER.

My hurry is great, if Cloris has any thing to say,—

CLORIS.

I detain you too, I fear.

But as thy faith is plighted to me, I am not the least
Alarmed at thy indifference. Did not thy business
Press thee to be gone, I would have shewn thee
What Thyrsis's muse has produced for the charming
Object of his passion. I have just obtained it and
Some letters from the object he adores. But your
Time is precious, another opportunity—

PHILANDER.

The present time is best, I can spare a few
Minutes for their perusal : quick Cloris, satisfy
My curiosity, let me see how he has depicted his
Flame.

CLORIS.

Here they are, but you must promise me
Before you have them, never to divulge what is
Contained therein : do not think—

PHI-

PHILANDER (recognizing the letters.)

Ay, and are they then in your possession, return them Cloris.—

CLORIS.

No, Philander, they are as well in my custody As in yours. I shall preserve them better, and Keep by me the perjured words of an inconstant Woman.

PHILANDER.

Madam, your sex protects you, but I will not tamely put up with this injury : Your brother, Cloris, your brother's blood Shall answer for this violence.

CLORIS.

How, Philander, valiant on a sudden, Ha, ha, ha, he whose peaceable hand would never Suffer him to draw his sword, now talks of Honour and of blood ; indeed, couragious sir, if Your sword does no more execution than your Words, it will not terrify even a woman.

PHILANDER.

You may joke, madam, but the event will Prove my courage. But I lose my time in talking To an idle woman. Farewel ! tremble for thy Brother.

CLORIS.

If I had no other reason to tremble for his life than from thy threats, Cloris would be indeed Happy. But alas ! his passion o'erwhelms his Reason.

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

MELITE and NURSE.

NURSE.

This obstinacy to be so secret and reserved unjustly Accuses me of indiscretion.

MELITE

MELITE,

Your importunity is insupportable ; how can I Inform you of what I am not acquainted with ?

NURSE.

The visits of Erastus now less frequent, is a Sufficient proof of some secret disquiet ; besides the Coldness and discontent between you, are only certain

Signs of a disgust—yet you would conceal this Mystery from me, and thus be severely punished for Want of my advice, which hitherto you have Successfully followed.

MELITE.

If thou would'st have me devine the cause Of Erastus's absence, possibly it may arise from his Having met with a more agreeable object than Melite to entertain him.

NURSE.

No, Melite, 'tis not on such slight foundations That a lover quits his mistress, whom he has most Faithfully followed for two years. Perhaps, some Disdain on your part has affronted him ; but this Practice should not be followed by young women : She who is seen in public, should govern Herself with address and circumspection : disdain and Frowns become her not ; or, if she ought at any time to

Use them, it should be when by absence her lover Deserves reproof. A little coldness properly managed May fix the youth whose heart is not wholly Engaged ; and this pride might make him more

Esteem the gentle nature he before did not perceive. Besides, she should render herself agreeable to all, Hear all that's said, and without letting her heart be Surprized, be complaisant, and permit their vows : Her looks should be the same to every lover, So that not one may be jealous of another, yet Each seperately think himself the happy object Of her choice. Thus should she form her conduct

And

And let all her admirers live in hope, till she has
Made the prudent choice, and preferred the man
Whose fortune is superior to her own.
If Melite, you had closely pursued this track
Erastus would at present have been more conformable

MELITE.

But this division of my regard, suits not
Erastus's disposition; nor will he suffer me to look
On any other, thinking that every word I speak to
Any one but him, are but as so many thefts
Committed on his love.

NURSE.

I now perfectly understand thee, and conceive the
Reason of his absence. But who is this rival?—

MELITE.

If you so perfectly understand me, you must
Know 'tis Thyrsis.

NURSE.

How, Thyrsis, his best friend! it grieves me
Much, that thou hast sown discord between them,
Besides thou must perceive the disadvantage
Between the two, Erastus has much more wealth
than Thyrsis.

MELITE.

Wealth has no power o'er a generous mind.

NURSE.

All the world esteems him, and every female but
You, would be happy in such an offer.

MELITE.

The report of his merit does not dazzle me.

NURSE.

Consider his fortune?

MELITE.

Let him distribute it to those who want it.

NURSE.

Think, 'tis that alone mankind esteems.

MELITE.

And 'tis that alone makes mankind so despicable.
A man, whose only virtues consists in wealth
Will be only esteemed by mean and wretched minds.

NURSE.

MELITE,

Your importunity is insupportable ; how can I
Inform you of what I am not acquainted with ?

NURSE,

The visits of Eraſtus now leſs frequent, is a
Sufficient proof of ſome ſecret diſquiet ; beſides the
Coldneſs and diſcontent between you, are only
certain

Signs of a diſguſt—yet you would conceal this
Myſtery from me, and thus be ſeverely puniſhed for
Want of my advice, which hitherto you have
Succesſfully followed.

MELITE.

If thou would'ſt have me devine the cauſe
Of Eraſtus's abſence, poſſibly it may ariſe from his
Having met with a more agreeable object than
Melite to entertain him.

NURSE.

No, Melite, 'tis not on ſuch ſlight foundations
That a lover quits his miſtreſs, whom he has moſt
Faithfully followed for two years. Perhaps, ſome
Diſdain on your part has affronted him ; but this
Practice ſhould not be followed by young women :
She who is ſeen in public, ſhould govern
Herſelf with addreſs and circumſpection : diſdain and
Frowns become her not ; or, if ſhe ought at any
time to

Uſe them, it ſhould be when by abſence her lover
Deſerves reproof. A little coldneſs properly managed
May fix the youth whoſe heart is not wholly
Engaged ; and this pride might make him
more

Esteem the gentle nature he before did not perceive.
Beſides, ſhe ſhould render herſelf agreeable to all,
Hear all that's ſaid, and without letting her heart be
Surprized, be complaiſant, and permit their vows :
Her looks ſhould be the ſame to every lover,
So that not one may be jealous of another, yet
Each ſeperately think himſelf the happy object
Of her choice. Thus ſhould ſhe form her conduct
And

And let all her admirers live in hope, till she has
Made the prudent choice, and preferred the man
Whose fortune is superior to her own.
If Melite, you had closely pursued this track
Erasus would at present have been more conformable

MELITE.

But this division of my regard, suits not
Erasus's disposition; nor will he suffer me to look
On any other, thinking that every word I speak to
Any one but him, are but as so many thefts
Committed on his love.

NURSE.

I now perfectly understand thee, and conceive the
Reason of his absence. But who is this rival?—

MELITE.

If you so perfectly understand me, you must
Know 'tis Thyrsis.

NURSE.

How, Thyrsis, his best friend! it grieves me
Much, that thou hast sown discord between them,
Besides thou must perceive the disadvantage
Between the two, Erasus has much more wealth
than Thyrsis.

MELITE.

Wealth has no power o'er a generous mind.

NURSE.

All the world esteems him, and every female but
You, would be happy in such an offer.

MELITE.

The report of his merit does not dazzle me.

NURSE.

Consider his fortune?

MELITE.

Let him distribute it to those who want it.

NURSE.

Think, 'tis that alone mankind esteems.

MELITE.

And 'tis that alone makes mankind so despicable.
A man, whose only virtues consists in wealth
Will be only esteemed by mean and wretched minds.

NURSE.

NURSE.

If he has any faults his money can repair them.

MELITE.

Rather say his money will produce them.
The rich man, commonly despises good qualities
Which are the solid and only ornaments: and a
disgraceful

Luxury and a vicious life, are the too common
Attendants on a weighty purse.

NURSE.

At length, then I perceive——

MELITE.

That a jealous lover, though possessed
Of unbounded riches, will never obtain a place
Within my heart.

NURSE.

Too plain I see, then, that this flatterer of thy
Charms, has gained a conquest o'er thee, and in
Spite of all my prudent counsel has implanted
Errors in thy mind. Should thy mother know this—

MELITE.

Leave that care to me. I see Thyrsis's
Sister coming this way.

NURSE.

Perhaps, she brings you some news from this
New adorer.

MELITE.

Your curiosity is too impertinent. Leave me,
That our discourse may not be interrupted, by thy
Officious care. [Exit Nurse.

S C E N E II.

CLORIS and MELITE.

CLORIS.

Altho' madam, acquainted with you, but
By name, yet your merit which fame speaks loudly
Of, makes me take part in whatever concerns you.
Therefore, hazarding my welcome, I come, perhaps
Importunely to evince you, that your affection has
Not been very prudently fixed

MELITE.

MELITE.

Madam, you might perhaps put some other Person in pain with this artifice. But as for me, I do assure you, I do not repent of having made So good a choice, nor is my heart proffered But to a youth who justly deserves my love.

CLORIS.

There, madam, you must excuse me ;
The youth I speak of is the least deserving of your love.

MELITE.

If I had only a weak assurance of his love, you Might render me suspicious ; but, I am not the least Astonished at your accusing him, since you have Some interest in his concerns.

CLORIS.

I own I love and esteem him, more than I did before his
Crime : you may judge if I can hate him, when it Was only in favour of me, that he has betrayed you.

MELITE.

To endeavour to make him unfaithful ; is that generous ?

CLORIS.

Is there need of compulsion where his duty lies ?
'Tis that he only follow, when he quits Melite.

MELITE.

How, does duty compel him to be unfaithful ?

CLORIS.

If he had no juster reason than his promise,
He ought to keep it.

MELITE.

That, madam, makes against you, to me his word is given.

MELITE.

Possibly, but long before, a solemn vow bound him to me ;
Can he then depart from it, or accept your offered hand ?

MELITE.

MELITE.

Excuse me, madam, I took you for another,
And thought it was Cloris that I spoke to.

CLORIS.

'Tis true, you are not deceived.

MELITE.

Then Cloris means to be merry at my expence,
And the sister of my lover forms a pretended rival.

CLORIS.

And to blind my suspicions, an unfaithful woman
Would appear true! ah, Melite, know that I am
But too well informed of what you would conceal;
Philander has told me all, you think he loves you,
But when last he left you, he related to me the
Most trivial circumstance with which you would
Suborn his passion.

MELITE.

I, suborn Philander! what art thou saying?

CLORIS.

The truth.

MELITE.

Indeed, you are exceedingly pleasant,
But rather go too far; therefore to stop your mirth
Know, I never saw Philander, nor ever heard of
Him before.

CLORIS.

Since then you dare boldly assert such falsities?
You will at least believe your own epistles.
There, madam, read, and convince yourself.

MELITE.

Heavens, what an impostor! this is
Not my writing.

CLORIS.

Since madam, you persist in your assertions
'Tis time to take my leave. The letters you may
Keep in your possession as proofs of your disgrace.

MELITE.

Mighty well; but madam, my innocence
Requires you to give up the name of this impostor,
That the disgrace may fall on the real author.

CLORIS.

CLORIS.

What signifies your denial when the proof's
So certain ; but those that can assert a fallity
Knows well how to support it.——

MELITE.

Do not, madam, take so much pains to defame me ;
All that I desire to know, is, if ever I spoke
A word to Philander.

CLORIS.

Let us a while stop our discourse, Lisis comes this
Way, his looks bespeak some displeasure.

S C E N E II.

LISIS, MELITE and CLORIS. .

LISIS to CLORIS

Prepare yourself to hear a mournful event,
Which plunges our hearts in wretchedness.
Thy brother is no more.

MELITE.

What, is Thyrsis dead ;

LISIS.

Yes, full of rage, at the inconstancy
Of the fair he loved, a thousand times he cursed
The sight of day ; called on your name, and at
Length in the utmost despair flung, himself in my
Arms and expired.

MELITE.

Oh ! heavens,

(faints.)

CLORIS.

Help, she faints, quick Lisis, fly for aid.

S C E N E III.

CLITO, NURSE, MELITE, LISIS and CLORIS.

CLITO.

From whence proceeds this noise ?

NURSE.

What means this sudden cry ?

CLORIS.

Behold Melite.

O

NURSE.

NURSE.

Alas ! she's dead ; her colour's flown, and her
whole
Frame is of an icy coldness.

CLORIS.

Affist to carry her to her chamber, my own
Sorrows overcome me. Oh ! my brother ; I come
To take a last salute.

S C E N E IV.

ERASTUS.

At length I triumph and my friendly fate
Has given me the success I wished,
Now is my happiness complete, since by my art
Melite no longer has her lover ;
And, as if my revenge was yet too small,
Philander and Cloris runs the same dangerous
course :

Yet why should their disunited hearts be
Punished for another's crime ! what have they done
That I should afflict their minds ?—unwelcome
conscience,

Fly far from me, and let nought but joy o'erwhelm
me.

Cloris offends me, being the sister of the ungrateful
Thyrsis, and Philander justly merits his punishment
For his credulity and infidelity. But what means
The sorrowful looks of Clito,

S C E N E V.

ERASTUS and CLITO.

CLITO.

Alas, your deceit and forgery, of which I
Was the accursed instrument, has killed the
Unfortunate Thyrsis.

ERASTUS.

'Tis well, the traitor's gone, and death has kindly
Relieved me from the rival who so long has
Troubled me.

CLITO.

CLITO.

But that is not all the effect of your scheme,
Melite is likewise dead.

ERASTUS.

Melite, say'st thou?

CLITO.

Alas ! it is but too true, the fatal moment
That she heard the news of Thyrsis's death
Terminated her life.

ERASTUS.

Oh ! heavens, then, I am indeed wretched !

CLITO.

Cease your complaints and rather boast that
Your arts have destroyed, all that the world
Held fair and lovely.

ERASTUS.

Villain, is it thus by your sarcastical reproach
You would upbraid me ; rather say, that by my
Artifice, at one stroke I've lost a mistress and a
Friend. Tell me that I have violated the most
Sacred laws, and betrayed, seduced, suborned and
Killed, all that was precious in friendship and
In love, and then thou wilt speak but half my
Guilt.—Thyrsis and Melite then are no more.
Oh ! thou cruel sisters, why didst thou so soon
Cut the thread of their precious lives ;—but why
Do I accuse thee ;—I, Erastus, am the impostor,
I am the detestable author of their miseries.
—Alas, what effect has my accursed revenge
Occasioned.—But why this useless sorrow, this
Superfluous repentance ; it will not give me
Back Melite. No, she has followed Thyrsis,
And Erastus soon will join them ; my blood shall
Answer my jealousy and my baseness—but whither
Will my despair drive my troubled soul ? what
Confused murmur's this that strikes my ear.
What flashes of fire is darting through the air ?
—See the thunderbolt with vengeance hurl'd,
Is levelled at me : see the earth opens
Ready to swallow me up, and plunge me to hell.
—Gods,

—Gods, I understand you; yes, I see them there, Happy in their loves, wandering in the Elyfian Fields.—There must my blood be shed.—for that The earth opens wide its jaws, and points out the Stygian lake.—I see it now—now I'm on it's Shore: O thou silent flood, whose name strikes Terror even to the Gods, be not enraged at a Villain's voice.—I'll ask thee but one question: Has Thyrsis and Melite passed this way?—you answer

Not,—Their shades are too precious to thy shores To lose them.—To you then I call, thou wandering Ghosts, who restless here remain, and to whom Charon has refused a passage; speak, give me Some information of Thyrsis and Melite, and by Th' immortal powers I swear, I'll obtain thy Passage over Styx.

CLITO.

What ails you, fir, your agitated mind Forms to your sight imaginary.—

ERASTUS.

Ah! Charon, I see thee now;
Quick, and with thy utmost speed conduct me
To yonder shore.

CLITO.

Be calm, and recover your reason; nay, look
Not so wild; know'st thou not I am Clito.

ERASTUS.

Speed thy slackened oar, thou black
Pilot of the infernal shades.—How thy
Bark already, sinks with the burden of
My crimes.—How, would'st thou save thyself
Without me; no, though Cerberus should attempt
To stop I'll follow thee.

(Runs after Clito, who is affrighted.)

S C E N E VI.

PHILANDER.

This usage of Thyrsis has stirred up all my
Courage, and notwithstanding all his fiery temper, I
Verily

Verily believe that should we meet, some blood
Would be shed. Come on then, thou presumptuous
Rival, Philander no longer fears thee,—but who
Comes here ; Erastus ! good heavens, how wild he
Looks.

S C E N E VII.

ERASTUS and PHILANDER.

ERASTUS.

Unbind Ixion, fix me in his place !
And ye barbarous sisters, ye infernal furies,
It is not thus the perfidious wretch should be
Punished ; now, now they press upon me ;
Rout ye then ye infernal shades, haste to my
Assistance, let us root out these inhuman monsters
And free yourselves from your troubles.—Come on
Then, attack them with your chains,
Crush their fiery scorpions ; ah, see they fly,
We are too powerful for those sons of hell.

PHILANDER.

By his discourse he seems to have lost
His senses.—Erastus, my dear friend, what
Despair drives thee to such phrenzy.

ERASTUS.

Equitable Minos, thou great judge of hell,
See how unjustly they load me with thy fetters :
My crime is not unpardonable ; 'tis true,
Thyrsis is dead, Melite too has followed him,
Cloris too wanders without her credulous Philander,
While I, I am the only cause, the guilty wretch
Who contrived the hellish scheme.—Those letters
Which turned Philander's heart, Erastus wrote.

PHILANDER.

Ah ! say'st thou so ? but thou feel'st sufficient
Punishment ;—thy reproving conscience
Attacks thee with a thousand torments worse
Than death. To deprive thee of life would be
Rendering thee a service, and my revenge is much
Better satisfied by thy present phrenzy. Oh !
Gracious powers, what a wretched dupe am I.

[Exit.

SCENE

M E L I T E.
S C E N E. VIII.

ERASTUS.

Barbarian, dost thou fly me then, and leave me a
Prey to these cruel sisters? ah! see with what joy
They look to see me in their power! hence Tisiphon,
Alecto, and those ministers of Pluto, fly
From my angry arm, thou know'st me not.
—In this traiterous body I wear the heart and
Strength of Hercules.—Hence, I say, or by
All the powers of hell, I'll overturn thy infernal
Dominions.—See, see, twice has the triple
Headed dog vomited his baneful aconite.
—He shall not stop my vengeance, I'll go to
The bottom of hell to release the tyrant,
And if Pluto dare to oppose my course,
I'll ravish Proserpine from his arms, and
Bear her back to earth.

[Exit.

S C E N E IX.

LISIS and CLORIS.

LISIS.

Rest content, thy brother is not dead,
But seeing his deplorable state, I tried by
This feigned tale, to see if the object of his love,
Would feel any regret at his death.
But now that I find Thyrsis is not indifferent
To Melite, and that she burns with an equal flame,
You soon again will see him.

CLORIS.

Some secret monitor informed me he was not dead,
And my spirits were not agitated with a real grief.

LISIS.

Yet to speak frankly, Cloris, few sisters
Ever are desperately grieved at the loss of an only
Brother, and the name of heiress has its consoling
charms

To comfort the female breast as well as ours.

CLORIS.

You are jocose; but business presses, so
Farewell, I fly to render Melite the agreeable
News of Thyrsis's life,

[Exeunt.
ACT

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

CLITO and NURSE.

CLITO.

I have told thee all, nor concealed any part of
The deceit.

NURSE.

It is well, but is it possible that
Erastus's conscience pricks him so violently
As to deprive him of his reason.

CLITO.

'Tis true, I saw him last, his extravagancies
Were exceeding great; talked of hell and Pluto,
And taking me for Charon, pursued me with his
utmost
Speed, and belaboured me in such a manner, that
I do assure you, had the old waterman received
Such fare from all his customers, he would be heartily
Glad to quit his employment.

NURSE.

Pleasant illusion!

CLITO.

Yes, the recital may be pleasant enough to you, but
To me who feel the effects, it acts in quite a different
Manner; indeed, if my feet had not befriended me,
I should not have had a tooth left in my mouth.

NURSE.

That was but bad payment for the service you
Had done him.

ERASTUS (behind the Scenes.)

Stop, poltroons.

CLITO.

Farewel nurse, I hear his
Voice, and will leave you to be his Proserpine, but,
For me, if he ever takes me for Charon again,
May I have not a whole bone remaining within my
skin. [Exit.

S C E N E II.

ERASTUS and NURSE.

In vain I call thee to defend thyself; yes, ye
Cowardly squadrons of affrighted phantoms,

See

See they fly for safety to dreary dungeons
 And scarcely daring to trust themselves to the
 Darkness round them, wish for another hell to
 Fall and hide them from my angry fight.
 My voice alone terrifies them; look how they
 Tremble; Tisiphon too, Alecto and Megara have
 Extinguished their torches, and the fates in confusion
 Have abandoned their scissars. Charon aghast
 Stood in his boat with crossed arms, astonished
 That no ghost calls him since my arrival.
 —Oh, ye powerful Gods, why did not thy thunder
 Destroy me at the design of my atrocious crime.
 Ah! Melite: ah! Thyrsis! the cruelty of the Gods
 Have chosen a just punishment for my treachery.
 Hell alone they thought was not enough, and have
 Added the dreadful remembrance of my crime
 To torment me, more terrible than all the fire,
 scorpions,

Chains and punishment that hell can inflict.
 Dreadful remembrance, for a while be quiet;
 At least let me before I die, see those happy shades
 Then use all thy rigour, or if thou still will not,
 Finish a wretched life. (puts his hand to his sword)
 With this I will assist thee;—but look, now
 I see Melite. Oh! lovely shade, (sees the nurse)
 Your hated enemy is here before you. It is
 Erastus; he whose only desire is to evince thee of
 His penitence with his life.

NURSE.

Why do you suffer such frenzy to reign
 Predominant o'er your mind? has hell such light
 As this?

ERASTUS.

This present brightness which now spreads
 Around, is but the refulgence of thy eyes.

NURSE.

Calm thy passion, look at my face more narrowly
 Have these eyes power like Melite's.

ERASTUS.

I own, they have a heavy look, and now I look
On that face again, I am astonished to see the
Colour different, the wrinkles speak it to be more
Aged: ah! Melite, how art thou transformed
since

Death; thou hast all the appearance of thy ancient
Nurse. O Gods, 'tis she herself—What then,
Dost thou seek Melite here.

NURSE.

Your disturb'd imagination, paints to you
Ideal places. Look around you, you are still
On earth; Melite too is alive, Clito who saw
Her swoon, thought her dead, and too hasty carried
Thee the fatal news; Thyrsis too still lives and is
Going to receive the reward of his fidelity.

ERASTUS.

Thou canst not deceive me, already have
I sought them in these infernal regions; nay,
Have encountered dangers for to find them, nor—

NURSE.

How, your senses are deceived by false appear-
ances.
The infernal regions, combats, and all the fancied
Images of your brain are nought but illusions.

ERASTUS.

What, have I not seen the monsters fly before
Me, attacked Pluto and drove him from his throne.

NURSE.

Mortals on earth, seeing your phrenzy might
Possibly have flown before you, dreading your
Mischievous rage;—but look again, does this
Place resemble hell; these walls, these buildings,
Melite's house and Clito's, do they appear like
Infernal structures, or resemble Pluto's palace?

ERASTUS.

'Tis true, I begin to think my reason has been
hurt.

Oh! thou good old woman, compassionate my
Wandering senses, which my too poignant grief

P

Has

Has disturbed. Let me see Melite, my recovery
Depends on speaking with her.

NURSE.

Yet a little defer this visit, till you are perfect
Master of your reason. Your face and air have
Not a calm appearance yet : a little rest will
Be of service.

ERASTUS.

Let me intreat you to consent to my request,
Lest my feeble reason deprived of thee for a
Friendly guide, should again relapse.

NURSE.

If it is so, I consent ; come on then and
Let us try what effect you can now have
On Melite's heart.

S C E N E III.

CLORIS and PHILANDER.

CLORIS.

Trouble me no more, Philander, I beseech thee
No longer is it to effect me in thy power.
Your protestations only now offends me :
Convinced of the shortness of their duration,
I ne'er will accept for pledge a perjured oath,
Nor receive a heart so quickly turn'd by another's
Charms, or which a pretended letter can so soon
Change from the first object it was offered to.

PHILANDER.

Oh, at least forgive the crime, and forget the
Remembrance of so disgraceful an action ; 'tis true,
My fault is great, yet if ever——

CLORIS.

Cease to mention thy love, which only
Reproaches me with the flame I once felt
For so treacherous a lover.

PHILANDER.

Yet Cloris, if ever my former vows merited
Thy favour, if ever the return of my love touched
Thy heart, hear me.

CLORIS.

CLORIS.

Thy folly too well points me out Philander's
mind;

There I read that such a maid as Cloris, has not
Charms strong enough to bind so fickle a lover.
Melite's features can alone subdue thee, and 'tis
in vain

Thy love is again offered to me; Cloris can
Never accept of a divided heart.

PHILANDER.

Alas! then Cloris, some more favoured youth has
Usurped my place? it is sufficient: thy disdain
Too greatly affects me. Farewel, no hope any
longer
Remains, and a future time may make Cloris repent
Of her cruelty.

CLORIS.

Farewel, Melite and I shall have sufficient cause
To laugh at your expence. Have you no message
to your
Lovely enchantress?

PHILANDER.

Yes; tell her from me, that Melite, Cloris and
Thyrsis
Will too late perceive to what lengths your hate has
Driven me.

CLORIS.

Do not fear that thy anger will terrify us,
Lest——

PHILANDER.

You rally, but you will soon find, I know
How to revenge an abused lover. Farewel. [Exit.

CLORIS.

Farewel; thy threats only afford me cause
For laughter,

S C E N E IV.

THYRSIS and MELITE.

THYRSIS.

Oh! my Melite, since fate has dissipated our fear,
And granted all our wishes, let our happiness be no
Longer

Longer crossed by our past misfortunes : let our
Souls give way to all the ardent transports which
Love inspires. We now no longer have need
Of looks alone to explain our passions ; those eyes,
Those faithful interpreters of our secret love,
Which so often have taught me what the voice
Dared not utter ; their confidence is no longer
necessary.

Love in freedom now may utter all his thoughts,
And refuses the assistance of what in a growing
passion

Modesty and fear can only speak with.—But yet,
What blasphemy to those beautiful eyes : the mouth
Is too weak where the love is so excessive ; their
Language explains more than all the rest.
But my Melite, why so silent ?

MELITE.

You are talking to my eyes, and they answer thee.

THYRSIS.

Yes, my Melite, I read the love which now beams
From those eyes, and I have now no greater blessing
To ask the Gods.

MELITE.

Thyrsis may be assured, that my eyes only
Speak the language of my heart ; when the false
Report of thy death was spread abroad, the sen-
timents

Of my soul were but too well explained ; but when I
Heard my Thyrsis lived, my only wish for life was then
For him. When the obdurate heart of an aged mother
Was softened in thy favour, and a consent gained for
Our union, what can speak my joy.—a joy
Which now my heart wants words to speak the
Idea of.—Yet, Thyrsis, though my love was so
powerful

For thee, thou could'st not depend on it ; the forged
letters

Of a miscreant rendered thee jealous and enraged.

THYRSIS.

THYRSIS.

I blush, my Melite, for the fault; but who, that
Loved like me, could avoid feeling, when so strong
A mark for suspicion was presented him; but no
Sooner had reason taken place, then no longer
Any doubt of thy love remained.

MELITE.

My esteem for thee readily grants a pardon
For thy fault; and criminal as you are, yet I no
Longer will remember that you are so.

THYRSIS.

O, happiness inexpressible; I think myself happy
In being guilty, since I meet with a
Reward when I have deserved a punishment.
I shall love the author of this stratagem,
And if ever I know the hand that dared——

S C E N E V.

CLORIS, THYRSIS and MELITE.

CLORIS.

I was cruel, Thyrsis, thus to deceive thy sister,
and let
Her so long remain in suspense of thy life.

THYRSIS.

Love has indeed made me somewhat guilty,
But Philander, no doubt, has ere now
Done me justice. Tell me, Cloris,
Has he seen you again without a blush.

CLORIS.

The unfaithful wretch has made me so many
New vows, oaths, and offers, all mingled with a
Repenting face, that——

MELITE.

That you could not help looking on with a
Favourable eye.

CLORIS.

You are wrong.

THYRSIS.

How? have you refused him.

CLORIS.

CLORIS.

His words have had no effect.

MELITE.

And your love is absolutely turned to aversion.

CLORIS.

No, not absolutely so, but I am rather too cunning
To be made a dupe of a second time.

MELITE.

That is to say——

CLORIS.

That his fickle humour never binds
Me again to him. In vain, he again strives to
Gain my love, since it is happy for me that he
Changed before the yoke of Hymen was put on.
To be his, would make me wretched.—No, let him
Seek another dupe, —I'll wait for a better prospect.

MELITE.

But my dear Cloris, for my sake, for your
Brother's, be not so prejudiced against him.

CLORIS.

It is in vain, his former contempt shall be
Returned, nor can all the intreaties you can
Make, alter my resolution.

S C E N E VI.

THYRSIS, NURSE, ERASTUS, MELITE and CLORIS.

THYRSIS.

Let us end this dispute then; the excess of my
Love will not suffer that frivolous objects
Shall disturb this day's felicity. All our thoughts
Are at present due to those bonds which will soon
Render me the happiest of mortals.

NURSE.

Your thoughts may be otherwise employed:
Turn this way, Thyrsis, your rival seeks you and
Demands satisfaction for the place you have usurped.

ERASTUS and MELITE.

No, far be future revenge from Erastus's breast;
You, madam, now see before you a wretch

Whose

Whose eternal conscience renders the day odious.
 At your feet then I lay my life ; take it, madam,
 And revenge yourself, since death would be
 The greatest felicity earth can afford. Avenge
 Your wrongs, and deprive of life the impostor
 Who has been the cause of all these troubles.

MELITE.

See the surest paths of heaven to point out her
 Guilty victims, and accomplish its designs. Your
 Stratagem to destroy our loves, has only served to
 Make them burn the stronger, and fate has drawn a
 Remedy from the very wound you gave.
 Since then, matters have ended thus happily,
 We will no longer look on thy scheme as criminal,
 As the event has turned out so well. But
 Since you regard it as a crime, accept my pardon,
 If your repose will be established thereby.

ERASTUS.

Confused and abashed at so much goodness,
 And since I have been the guilty occasion of your
 Happiness—

NURSE TO ERASTUS.

Quit this harangue and idle compliments,
 Nor trouble us with the remembrance of past ills :
 You have certainly been guilty, and I will furnish
 A punishment which shall last for life, and since
 Cloris thro' your means has lost a lover
 Supply his place.

ERASTUS TO CLORIS.

If the lovely Cloris, can accept of a hand which
 Has caused so much mischief, I will offer it.
 Melite will answer for my perseverance ;
 My love for her, now superfluous
 And abated since her heart is with another,
 Now turns towards the fair one I adore.

THYRSIS.

What say'st thou, sister ?

CLORIS.

CLORIS.

My affection will always depend on
My brother's will.

THYRSIS.

Thou knowest Cloris, I was ever ready to
Gratify your desires. By thy looks I read
That my consent would not be disagreeable; take
It then, and may the bounteous Gods, henceforth
leave no

Mistrust between us. And that Thyrsis respecting
Erastus as his brother, and Melité you as his sister,
Our years may flow with greater felicity.

ERASTUS.

I am perfectly happy, and receive the gift with
thanks,
But yet my happiness is not compleat, without
My Cloris will own, I am not disagreeable to her.

CLORIS.

Only be faithful, and for thy reward I beg for
time——

THYRSIS.

Time, this day shall make us all happy;
My Melite and I will lead the way, you and Erastus
Shall follow.

CLORIS.

At least, brother, grant some longer time, I
Have neither his prayers, his sighs
And all the tender services of a lover.

ERASTUS.

Oh! my Cloris, my future conduct shall be all
The lover; therefore grant Melite and Thyrsis's
Desires, and render happy one whose whole study
Shall be to make you so.

CLORIS.

'Tis in vain all your solicitations, I shall
Rely on the word of Melite's mother, her advice
Will prevent any future repentance, and if she
Requests it, thy merit, Erastus will plead the rest.

THYRSIS.

M E L I T E.

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THYRSIS.

Let us then immediately set about it, as for
You nurse, to comfort your aged years, we
Give thee to Philander for a wife. [Exit.

NURSE.

Laugh as you please ; but formerly as gay
Sparks as you, have thought themselves too happy
When I did not frown. My eyes had then
The power of the sun, and spread abroad their
refulgent

Rays. My features were all lovely, and not a part
About me, but was spoken of as a miracle of
beauty.

My words were oracles on which my lovers fate
Depended.—However, though my eyes have lost
Their amorous fire, I shall still be happy, if by my
Endeavours I can gain the esteem and applause
Of this good company.

F I N I S.

